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UNCLAS SAN JOSE 001995

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR H (JCOOPER), WHA/CEN (MKOPOLOW)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [CS](#)

SUBJECT: SENATOR SPECTER BRIEFED ON COUNTER-DRUG EFFORTS,  
CANCER VACCINE TRIAL

REF: A. SAN JOSE 1904

[1](#)B. SAN JOSE 1899

[1](#)1. Summary: Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) visited the Guanacaste Province of Northern Costa Rica from August 18-20. The Charge and other Embassy Officers briefed the Senator in advance of a meeting with the Director of Costa Rica's Counter-Drug Police. On August 19, the Senator discussed NIH-funded human trials of a vaccine for cervical cancer with the project's director and reviewed efforts by the Papagayo Resort to reduce the environmental impact of its tourism project. End Summary.

[1](#)2. Charge greeted Senator Specter upon his arrival at the Liberia airport and provided an overview of Costa Rica's political and economic situation during the drive to the hotel. The Office of the Defense Representative and the Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Officer participated in this briefing and addressed the Senator's questions on counter-narcotics efforts. At the hotel, the Senator met for over an hour with the DEA Country Attache, Director of Costa Rica's Counter Drug Police Allan Solano, and the Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Officer. Senator Specter was briefed on the level of U.S.-Costa Rican cooperation against narco-traffickers, Costa Rican counter-narcotics law, the bilateral maritime agreement (for drug interdiction), as well as trafficking methods and trends.

[1](#)3. On August 19, Project Guanacaste Director Dr. Rolando Herrero visited the Senator. Project Guanacaste is a large-scale clinical trial of a vaccine against human papillomavirus which causes cervical cancer. The project is being conducted in coordination with the U.S. National Cancer Institute and with funding from the U.S. National Institutes of Health. Dr. Herrero provided detailed information on the scope of the trials, the various phases of the Project, and the importance of the results obtained to date. Senator Specter and his accompanying physician, Captain Ron Smith, asked numerous detailed questions during the hour-long meeting. Senator Specter then toured the sprawling Papagayo Resort with the head of the resort's ecological development consortium, Mr. Bernardino Rojas, who detailed the resort's many efforts to reduce its environmental impact.

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